

The Life of Homer
Introductory Note

The following document, *The Life of Homer*, has been copied verbatim from an edition of Homer's *Odyssey*, translated into English by Theodore Alois Buckley, published in London in 1851, and available online at the following site: [Buckley Odyssey](#). Buckley included the *Life* in his supplementary material because "It is the earliest memoir of the supposed author of the Iliad we possess, and, as such merits translation."

The original author of the *Life of Homer* is unknown. At one point it was believed to have been composed by the famous Greek historian Herodotus, but that notion is now considered highly unlikely; hence, the author is commonly referred to as pseudo-Herodotus. This translation of the *Life* into English was undertaken by Kenneth Robert Henderson Mackenzie in 1851.

In transcribing this work, I have included the often very detailed footnotes and followed Mackenzie's rather odd (by modern conventions) punctuation.

For a short article on the credibility of the content of the *Life of Homer*, please consult the following internet site: [Life of Homer](#).

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THE LIFE OF HOMER

THE
LIFE OF HOMER,

ATTRIBUTED TO HERODOTUS OF HALICARNASSUS

TRANSLATED

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“Death makes no conquest of this conqueror;
for now he lives in fame though not in life.”
King Richard III.iii.I.

“Certe similis nemo Homeri”
Cicero, De Divin. li. 47

HERODOTUS of Halicarnassus,¹ in the pursuit of truth, writes this history of the birth and life of Homer.

I. When many years ago, the city of Cumæ in Æolia was built, there flocked to it many persons of the various nations of Greece, and, among them, were some from Magnesia.² One of these was Menapolus, the son of Ithagenes, the son of Crito. This man, far from possessing riches, had scarcely the means of subsistence. When settled in Cumæ, he married the daughter of Omyretis. By this marriage, he had one child, a girl, whom he called Critheïs. The husband and wife both died, leaving this child very young. The father, before his death, appointed Cleanax of Argos, one of his most intimate friends, her guardian.

II, In the course of time, by a secret intrigue, Critheïs found herself with child. This was for some time concealed; but Cleanax, having discovered it, was much afflicted by the occurrence, and privately reproached her with her fault, laying before her the dishonour she had brought upon herself. To repair the evil as much as possible, was now the subject of his thoughts. The inhabitants of

¹ Some editions of the History bore, as we find from Aristotle, (Rhetoric ii.9, § 1,) the following variation from our usual superscription or preface: “This is the exposition of the historical researches of Herodotus of *Thurium*,” &c. It is to be presumed that the edition which Aristotle mentioned was one of those revised after his retiring to that town from Halicarnassus, (now called Budrun,) in the fortieth year of his age, B.C. 444. Thurium was built near the ruins of Sybaris, in Lucania, by some Athenians. Some say, that the banished Thucydides, (afterwards recalled,) Lysias, son of Cephalus, the celebrated orator, accompanied Herodotus, (Strabo vi; Plin. xii 4; Mela ii. 4,) but this is doubtful.

² The present Mansa.

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Cumæ were at this time building a town in the basin of the Hermæan Gulf.³ Theseus⁴ wishing to render the name of his wife immortal, called it Smyrna. He was a Thessalian, and of one of the most illustrious families in that country. His father was Eumelus, son of Admetus,⁵ from whom he inherited a considerable property.⁶ Cleanax conducted Critheïs secretly to that town, and committed her to the charge of Ismenias of Bœotia, a friend of his, on whom the lot had fallen to go to that colony.

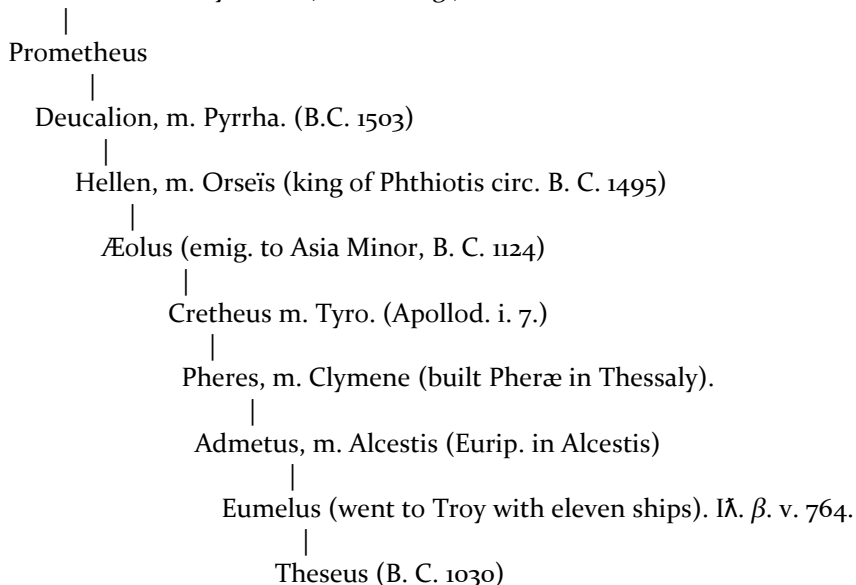
III, Critheïs, being near her confinement, resorted to a festival held on the bank of the river Meles, in company with other women; while there, the pains

³ The present gulf of Smyrna; the river on which that place is situated, then called Meles, now Sarabat or Kedona. Some of the ancients suppose that Homer composed his poems in a cave near the sources of this river, and thence called his compositions *Meletææ chartæ*. Strabo xii; Stat. ii; Sylv. vii. 34; Tibull. iv. el. 1. 201; Paus. vii. 5. Smyrna was built by the Cumæans, B. C. 1015. Eratosthenes. Some say that Smyrna was the name of an Amazon: according to our author, it was named after the wife of Theseus, of whom mention will presently be made. Alyattes expelled the Cimmerians from Smyrna. Herodotus I. 16. Alexander, or, as Strabo affirms, Lysimachus, rebuilt the town, which had remained ruinous and desolate for four hundred years, i. e. from the time of Alyattes. Marcus Aurelius repaired the damage done to it by an earthquake, B. C. 180. The Smyrnæans had a building, and a brass coin, called *Homerium*. Strabo xii. and xiv.; Ital. viii. 565; Paus. v. § 8; Mela. i. 17; Herod. i. 55; v. 101; D'Anville's Geographic abrégée, tom. ii. p. 8.

⁴ Tacitus (iv. 56) confounds this Theseus with the early mythical king of Attica. The commentators on Tacitus have passed over his life in silence. In the Anthology there is an inscription for a statue of Peisistratus, which seems to attribute the building of Smyrna to the Athenians.

⁵ The following is the genealogy of Theseus, omitting the mystical period, and commencing at the mythical age:--

Iapetus, m. Asia or Clymene. (Hes. Theog.)



⁶ Eumelus, being the son of a king, must have had both power and riches. Aristides (*Monodiâ de Smyrnâ*) mentions Theseus as one of the founders of the city, but without further notice. But see Herodotus, (i. 16.) who says that Smyrna was founded from Colophon.

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of childbirth came upon her, and she brought forth Homer, who, far from being blind, had excellent eyes. She named him Melesigenes, having been born by the river Meles. Chitheïs remained some time with Ismenias, but afterwards left him, supporting herself and son by the work of her hands,⁷ and upon the proceeds of the charity of her fellow-citizens, educating the boy as she could.

IV. There lived at Smyrna, at this time, a man named Phemius, a teacher of literature and music;⁸ who not being married, engaged Critheïs to manage his household, and spin the flax he received as the price of his scholastic labours. She acquitted herself of the task so satisfactorily, and conducted herself so modestly, that she won his esteem. He proposed to marry her, and, as an inducement to it, promised to adopt her son, intimating that the boy, carefully educated and instructed, would become a clever man; for he perceived in him a thoughtful and studious disposition. Critheïs, moved by these solicitations, consented to become his wife.

V. Care and an excellent education seconding the happy talents with which nature had endowed him, Melesigenes soon surpassed his schoolfellows in every attainment, and when older, he became as wise as his instructor. Phemius died,⁹ leaving him heir to his property; his mother did not long survive her husband. Melesigenes, now his own master, taught in the school of Phemius, where every one applauded him. He excited the admiration, not only of the inhabitants of Smyrna, but also of the numerous strangers who resorted to that port on account of the trade carried on there, particularly in the exportation of corn, much of which came from the environs of the town. These, when their business was finished, frequented his school in great numbers.

VI. Among these strangers, was one whose name was Mentés. He had come from the island of Leucadia¹⁰ to buy corn; the vessel in which he had arrived was his own; he also was a lettered man, and well educated for those times.

⁷ It is supposed by Eustathius (Comment. ad Il. xii. page 913) that Homer commemorated the honest endeavours of his mother to support herself and son, in the following lines: "As a just and industrious woman, holds the scale, and weighs the wool by which she lives; she is attentive to equalize the balances, so that she may afford her children a poor subsistence, the price of fatiguing labour." Il. xii. 433-435.

⁸ Music was the general term under which the ancients comprehended the knowledge of philosophy, logic, literature, harmonics, and in fact all that concerns mental culture. Gymnastics was its parallel, as the art of beautifying and strengthening the body. Aristophanes several times calls the art of dramatic writing, Music. Conf. Sch. Aristoph. Equites 188. Plato Repub. ii. 17.

⁹ Homer, in gratitude to his preceptor, has celebrated his praise in the Odyssey, i 154, 155, 325, &c.; xvii. 261; and xxii. 330-356.

¹⁰ Now called *Santa Maura*, one of the Ionian Isles, on the coast of Epirus.

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This man persuaded Melesigenes to close his school, and accompany him on his travels. He promised to defray all the expenses, and give him a certain stipend, telling him that, while he was young, it was imperative on him to see with his own eyes the countries and cities of which he might thereafter have occasion to speak. These reasonings prevailed, I think, the more easily, as he had some idea, at that time, of devoting himself to the study of poetry, [which would be facilitated by travel, as his innate prejudices would thereby be stifled.] He quitted his school, and embarking with Mentès, examined all the curiosities of the countries which they visited, examined all the curiosities of the countries which they visited, and informed himself of every thing by interrogating every one he met. We may also suppose, that he recorded in writing all the information he thought worthy of preservation.

VII. After having travelled in Tyrrhenia and Iberia,¹¹ they arrived at the island of Ithaca. Melesigenes, who had already suffered pains in his eyes, now became much worse. Mentès, obliged to go to Leucadia, his native country, on business, left him at Ithaca in the care of a particular friend of his, called Mentor, the son of Alcimus. He promised Melesigenes to return to him, that they might continue their voyages. Mentor's assistance was given to Melesigenes most zealously. He was rich, and was reputed a just and hospitable man. It was here, and during this period, that Melesigenes acquired a knowledge of all the legends respecting Odysseys. The inhabitants of Ithaca assert "that Melesigenes became blind in their island." I myself incline to the opinion, that he was cured of his disease, or that it was alleviated, and that afterwards, when at Colophon, he permanently lost his sight. And so think the Colophonians.

VIII. Mentès, having sailed from Leucadia, arrived at Ithaca. Finding Melesigenes cured, he took him on board, and proceeded from place to place with him, coming at length to Colophon. It was there that Melesigenes was again attacked by the disease, which, raging more malevolently, left him totally blind. This misfortune determined him to depart from Colophon, and to return to Smyrna, where he studied the art of poetry and harmonics with much attention.

IX. After some time, the bad state of his affairs induced him to go to Cumæ.

¹¹ Wesseling throws a doubt on the probability of these voyages, supporting his assertions by a reference to Herodotus, (i. 163; viii. 132,) which is refuted by Larcher in his note on the passage.

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Setting out, he travelled over the Hermæan plain, and arrived at Neon-teichos,¹² a colony of Cumæ. It is related, that being at that city near an armourer's¹³ workshop, he recited these, his first verses:

“O ye, citizens of the amiable daughter of Cumæ,¹⁴ who cover the feet of Mount Sædena with your habitations, whose summit is shaded by refreshing woods, and whence flow the waters of divine Hermus, create of Zeus, respect the misfortunes of a stranger, who possesses no refuge for shelter.”

For the river Hermus flows near Neon-te, and Mount Sædena overlooks both. The name of the armourer was Tychius. These verses gave him such pleasure that he invited Melesigenes to his house. Full of commiseration for a blind man reduced to beggary, he promised to share all that he had with him. Melesigenes having entered, seated himself, and in the presence of several of the citizens, manifested his capabilities, by singing the exploits of Amphiaraüs against Thebes,¹⁵ and the Hymns to the gods.¹⁶ Each gave his opinion, and Melesigenes having drawn a just conclusion from their criticisms, his hearers were struck with admiration.

X. Whilst at Neon-teichos, his poems furnished him with the means of subsistence. The place he customarily occupied during the recitation of his

¹² See Herod. i. 149.

¹³ Literally, “*a currier's yard*,” but Larcher has been followed in the translation of the phrase, as the terms are almost synonymous, for the arms of the Greeks of that period were made of ox-hides, stretched on a metal frame, and faced with the same material. Thus, in ancient times the trades were exercised simultaneously. See the description of the shield of Ajax, (Iλ. vii. 219,) and Smith's Dictionary of Antiquities.

¹⁴ See Isaiah xxiii. 12. Paulinus, bishop of Nola, also says, in speaking of Massilia, the present Marseilles, founded by the Phocæans, (Thucyd. i. 13. Herod. i. 166) “*Massilia Granum filia*.” It serves to heighten the poetic effect of the verses. These verses are to be found in the Aldine and Florentine editions. The text of the third verse is corrupt, it runs “*ναίετε ἐς ἄδην, ἦς πόδα*.” Bernard Martin proposes the following emendation, “*ναίετε Σαιδηνηῆς πόδα*” Stephen of Byzantium (*Ἐθνικά*, edit. Westermann, Lips. 1839, 8vo) mentions Mount Sædena, which makes the reading more probable. Sædena may be a corruption of Sardena mentioned by older authors, therefore to restore Sardena, as Larcher does, would be to destroy a proof of the late origin of the Life. This is a fact worthy of notice in dating the composition of this treatise. Stephen of Byzantium lived under the reign of Justinian II., therefore this treatise must have been written some where about the same time.

¹⁵ This was probably the poem known by the title of the Thebaïs, attributed by Callinus (B. C. 700) to Homer, Paus. ix. 9; Welck. Cycl. p. 298. It consisted of 700 lines. On which see Mure, Greek Literature, vol. ii. 267-276; Leutsch. Theb. Cycl. Relic; Ritschl. De Alex. Bibl. p. 101. Conf. Livy, xxxvii. 19. Dühtzer (Epic. Græc. Fragm.) has collected all the fragments of the Cyclic poems. His work is well worthy of reference.

¹⁶ On the Hymns, see Mure, vol. ii, 317-337, and Voss's German translation of the hymn to Dêmêtêr, Heidelb., 1826.

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verses is still shown. It is held in great estimation even now, and is shaded by a poplar which was planted about the time of his arrival.¹⁷

XI. But at length, compelled by necessity, and finding scarcely sufficient to keep him alive, he determined to proceed to Cumæ, to see if he could meet with better fortune there. When ready to depart, he recited these verses:

“May my limbs support me to that honourable town, whose inhabitants possess no less prudence than sagacity.”

Having departed for Cumæ, he went by way of Larissa,¹⁸ considering that road the most convenient. It was there, as the Cumæans say, that he composed the epitaph of Gordius, king of Phrygia, at the request of the father and mother of the wife of that prince. It is engraven on the pillar of the monument of Gordius, where it may yet be seen.

“I am a maiden sculptured in bronze. Placed on the monument of Midas, as long as water may be seen to flow in the plains, and the trees to flower in spring; as long as the rising sun makes men to rejoice, and the moon, by the brilliancy of her light, dissipates the darkness of the night; as long as the rivers flow rapidly along between their banks, and the ocean covers the shore with its waves, I shall be continually seen reposing on this sad tomb, announcing to the passengers that Midas lies here interred.”¹⁹

XII. When Melesigenes arrived at Cumæ, he frequented the assemblies of the elders, and there recited his verses. Admiring their beautiful structure, they fell into an ecstasy of delight. Joyful at the reception his poems had prepared for him among the Cumæans, and at the pleasure with which they had heard him, he one day proposed to them, that if the state would maintain him, he would make the city of Cumæ very celebrated. His hearers approved of the proposition, and engaged him to present himself before the council, where they would support him with all their interest. Melesigenes, encouraged by their approbation, presented himself at the House of Assembly on an audience day, and addressing the person who had the office of presenting those who had any request to prefer, he begged to be allowed to enter. This officer did not neglect to present him the first opportunity that offered. Melesigenes, as soon as that

¹⁷ Should we not read “my arrival?” Poplars can hardly live so long.

¹⁸ According to Xenophon, (*Cyropæd.* vii. 1.) this city was afterwards given by Cyrus to some Egyptians in recompense for their bravery in the Assyrian war, and was still in the possession of their descendants at the time of that author.

¹⁹ Conf. *Plat. Phædrus*, § 106; *Diog. Laert.* i. 89. Simonides there attributes them to Cleobulus of Lindus, and with much apparent probability.

ceremony was over, addressed the assembly regarding the proposition he had formerly made. His speech ended, he retired, in order that the representatives might deliberate on the answer necessary to give him.

XIII, He that presented him, and all those representatives belonging to the Eders' Assembly, where he had recited, voted for him. It is said that one only opposed the measure, giving for his reasons, "that if they thought to feed *homers*,²⁰ they would find themselves encumbered with useless folks." From this time name of Homer, bestowed thus opprobriously on Melesigenes in consequence of his misfortune, was most generally used in speaking of him; for the Cumæans, in their dialect, called blind persons *homers*. Strangers always used this name in discoursing of the poet.

XIV. The Archon concluded with saying, "that it was impolitic to maintain the blind man." This caused the majority of the representatives to vote against the measure, the second time, and thus the Archon obtained more votes than opposers. The presenting officer communicated with Melesigenes on the subject, informing him of the progress of the debate, and of the decree. Deploring his ill fortune, he recited these verses: "To what sad fate has father Zeus destined me? I, who have been carefully educated at the feet of a beloved mother during the time that the people of Phriconis,²¹ skilful in taming horses, and breathing only war, raised the Æolian city, honourable Smyrna,²² on the borders of the ocean, by the behest of Zeus, that city traversed by the sacred waters of Meles. The illustrious daughters of Zeus, on their departure from these places, wished to immortalize this sacred town²³ by my verses; but, deaf to my voice, the brutish herd disdained my harmonious lays.²⁴ No, it shall not

²⁰ See Wakefield, Ep. to Fox, and Coleridge, sub init. Blomfield (Mus. Crit.) in reviewing Wakefield condemns the whole notion, and with reason. On the name signifying *collector* or *arranger*, see Welcker in *Der Epische Cyclus*, p. 127, and Wilson's Syst. of Hindu Mythology, Introd, p. lxii. For the various etymologies, Bode's *Gesch. der Hellen. Dichtkst.* vol. i. p. 55, n. 259, n.

²¹ Larcher translates this "the people of Phricium." Phricium was a town and mountain near Thermopylæ. A colony from thence built Cumæ. Hence Cumæ is occasionally called Phriconia. See § xxxviii., and Herod. i. 149.

²² Smyrna, as we have seen, (§ ii.) was built by the Cumæans. See note 6, p. ix.

²³ The poet refers again to Cumæ

²⁴ The old reading (and the reading of the Harleian MS., No. 5600) is as follows:

*Οἱ δ' ἀπανηνάσθην ἱερὴν ὄπα, φημι ἀοιδὴν.
Ἀφραδίην τῶν μὲν τε παθίον τις φράσεται ἀόθις
Ὅς σφιν . . . κ. τ. λ.*

The present translator has followed the emendation of Larcher, who suppresses the point after *ἀοιδὴν* and places it after *ἀφραδίην*, which is changed into *ἀφραδίη*; causing *ἀφραδίη* to relate to *οἱ δ' ἀπανηνάσθην*. See Larcher's note.

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continue so! whoever in blind folly heaped insults on my head, shall not escape unscathed. I will courageously endure the ills dealt out to me by the Deity. 'Tis over, I will no longer rest in Cumæ. My feet burn to depart hence, and my panting heart urges me to seek a foreign clime, and there to dwell, however insignificant the place may be."

XV. On leaving Cumæ for Phocæa he pronounced a malediction against the Cumæans, to the following effect: "that there never might be born in Cumæ a poet, who could render it celebrated, and give it glory." Arrived at Phocæa, he supported himself as he had done at Cumæ and elsewhere, assiduously frequenting the places of assembly, at which he recited his verses. There was, at that time, an unprincipled man named Thestorides at Phocæa, a teacher of the rudiments of literature. Having observed the talents of Homer, he offered to shelter and take care of him, if, as a recompense, Homer would permit him to take down his verses in writing, and if he would do the same with those he might hereafter compose. Homer, being poor and destitute, accepted his offer.

XVI. During his residence in Phocæa, at the house of Thestorides, he composed the Little Iliad,²⁵ of which the two first verses are as follows:

"I sing of Ilium and Dardania, abounding in excellent horses,²⁶ and the ills of the Greeks, servants of Mars, endured in their plains."

He next composed the Phocæid,²⁷ as the Phocæans say. When Thestorides

²⁵ The Little Iliad (*Ἰλιάς μικρά*) is generally considered to be the composition of Lesches or Lescheos, who flourished about the eighteenth Olympiad. This poem, and the Æthiopis of Arctinus, a more ancient writer, who lived in the beginning of the Olympiads, treated of the same subject, and so gave rise to an absurd anachronism, concerning a contest between the two poets. It has been (like all the cyclic poems) variously ascribed to Homer himself, to Thestorides of Phocæa (§ xvi), Cinæthos of Lacedæmon, and Diodorus of Erythræ. The poem was divided into four books, according to Proclus, who preserves an extract. It narrated the fate of Ajax, the exploits of Odysseus, Neoptolemus, and Philoctetes, and the final capture and sacking of Troy, (Arist. Poet. xxiii.,) which part of the poem received the name of the Destruction of Troy (*Ἰλίου πέρσις*). The poem possessing no unity excepting historical and chronological succession, Aristotle (loc. cit.) justly observes that eight tragedies might be made from it, while only one can be composed from the Iliad or Odyssey. Conf. Müller's History of Greek Literature, vi. § 3; Welcker, *Der Epische Cyclus*, pp. 132, 251, 272, 358, 368; Suidas, s. v, Ὀμηρος; Clemens Alex. i. p.381; Saumaise, *In exercitationibus Plinianis*, p. 847, et seq.; Mure, Greek Literature, vol. ii. 284, 285.

²⁶ Homer, in the Iliad, frequently calls the plains of Troy "rich in horses." There is some resemblance in Sophocles, (*Œdip. Col. v. 669.*) where the Chorus tells Œdipus that he had come to the land "renowned for the steed," speaking of Colonus.

²⁷ Of this poem nothing is known. It was probably a history of the founding and progress of the town of Phocæa, now called Pkokia. Fabricus conjectures that we should read Phæcid, instead of Phocæid. See Ovid, *Epist. iv. Ep. 12, l. 27,*

"Dignam Mœoniis Phæacida condere chartis
Cum te Pierides perdocuere tuæ."

had written down that poem, and the rest he had received from Homer, he neglected him, and determining to appropriate them to himself, left Phocæa, Homer thus addressed him:

“Thestorides, of the many things hidden from man, the most obscure is the human heart.” Thestorides, having sailed from Phocæa, retired to Chios, where he established a school of literature, and by his having recited Homer’s verses, which he did, attributing them to himself, he obtained great praise and much money. As to Homer, he continued in the same way of life as heretofore, being supported by his verses.

XVII. Shortly afterwards some merchants of Chios, having come to Phocæa, went to the assemblies where Homer recited. Surprised to hear those verses recited that they had so often applauded when spoken by Thestorides, they informed Homer that there was at Chios a teacher of literature, who was much esteemed for the recitation of the same poems. Homer, perceiving who it was, prepared for a journey to Chios. Having gone down to the port, he found no ship that was going to that island, but met with one about to sail for Erythræ,²⁸ to fetch timber. As that town seemed to be convenient for passing over into Chios, he accosted the seamen courteously, entreating them to allow him to accompany them, and, as an inducement, promised to recite some of his verses to them. They agreed to this, and on his having entered the vessel, and seated himself, after extolling their hospitality, he addressed these verses to them:

“Give ear to my prayer, powerful Poseidon, who reigneth over the vast plains of Helicon;²⁹ send us a favourable breeze, and allow a joyful return to these mariners, fellows in the voyage, and to the master of the vessel. May I arrive safely at the foot of frowning Mimas, and meet with just and worthy men! May I also avenge myself on the man, who, by deceit, has irritated Zeus, the hospitable god, against him; who, admitting me to his table, afterwards violated the sacred duties of the host in my person.”

XVIII. Arrived at Erythræ, with favourable winds, Homer remained for the rest of the day on board the vessel, but, next morning, begged the sailors to allow some one of them to conduct him to the town. They granted his request.

But see Cardinal Quirini (*De primordiis Corcyræ*, p. 19 et 20); Mure, vol. ii. 369. sqq.; Welck. *Ep. Cycl.* p. 248.

²⁸ A town of Ionia, opposite Chios, now called Ritre. It was built by Neleus, son of Codrus. See Paus. x. 12; Livy, xxxviii. 39; xlv. 28.

²⁹ The text (Harl. MSS. No. 5600) is as follows: *Ἐυρυχόρου μεδέων ἠδέ ξανθοῦ Ἑλικῶνος*. See Larcher’s note. Why Helicia, as with him, I am at a loss to conjecture.

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He departed, and having come to Erythræ, which is situated in a naked and rocky country, recited the following verses:

“Holy Mother Gaia, who dispensest thy riches to mankind, prodigal in goodness to those who thou favourest; to those who offend thee thou apportionest only a rocky and sterile soil.”

On his arrival he made inquiries concerning the navigation to Chios. A person who had known Homer in Phocæa, remembering him with regard, approached and embraced him. Homer begged his aid, which he readily gave.

XIX. Not finding any ship³⁰ in the harbour, they went to that part of the strand whence the fishermen usually put off, where they found one about to sail for Chios. The conductor of Homer entreated them to take him across with them; but, deaf to his prayers, they continued their preparations for departure. Homer, on this occurrence, made the following verses:

“Mariners, who traverse the seas, continually exposed to the hard vicissitudes of fortune, and who, to regale the more luxurious, seek a hardly-earned subsistence on the waves, honour Zeus, the god of hospitality, who reigns over us. His wrath is dreadful; beware lest it burst on your heads, should you offend him.”

The fishermen, all being ready, at length departed, but being driven about by adverse winds, were forced to return. They found Homer still seated on the strand. Hearing the noise of their return, he addressed them thus: “The winds are contrary; receive me on board, and they will change.” The fishermen, regretting their inhospitality, promised not to desert him, if he would come on board.

XX. He enters the vessel, they leave the shore, and now they approach the opposite coast. They begin to fish. Homer passed the night on the sea-shore, but, at the dawn of day, he departed. Wandering about, he came to a hamlet called Pithys,³¹ where he lay down to rest. During his sleep, the fruit of a pine-tree fell on him. Some call this fruit by the name of strobilus, others call them pine-cones.³² The following verses were made by Homer on this occasion:

³⁰ Πλοῖον must be understood with ἀποστολον. Conf. Ὁ μὲν δὴ ἀπόστολος ἐς τὴν Μίλητον ἦν . . . κ. τ. λ. Herod. i. 21. See Larcher’s note on the passage quoted.

³¹ Pithys signifies a cone. The island was probably very woody, as Salamis, celebrated for its woods, bore that name in very ancient times.

³² Galen (De Alimentorum facultate, tom. iv. p. 325) says, “The cone, or fruit of the pine, gives a juice of good quality, thick, and nourishing, but not easy of digestion. The Greeks of the present time do not call them *cones*, but *strobili*.” The occurrence of the word *strobilus* upsets, in Wesseling’s opinion, the probability of this having been a work of so early an age as Herodotus.

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“On the summit of Mount Ida there are pine-trees continually agitated by the winds, whose fruit is more agreeable than that of these. From the bosom of that mountain, iron shall come, sacred to the god of battles, when it shall be occupied by the Cebrenians.

For about this time the Cumæans were building Cebrene, on the heights of Mount Ida, near the place where the iron-mines are.

XXI. Homer, having set out from Pithys, went towards a troop of goats, being attracted by their cries. The dogs, seeing him approach, began to bark at and annoy him. Glaucus, for that was the name of the shepherd, hearing his cries, ran hastily, calling his dogs back, and menacing them.³³ This man, surprised to see a blind person alone, and not knowing how he came there, was rendered speechless from astonishment. Having accosted him, he asked him how he came to an uninhabited place, where there were no paths, or who had guided him thither. Homer related his misfortune to him. Glaucus had a tender heart, and was touched by the narration. He guided Homer to his own house, lighted a fire, prepared a repast, and setting it before him, pressed him to eat.

XXII. The dogs, instead of eating, continued to bark at Homer, as dogs usually do at strangers. Homer, observing it, recited these verses:

“Glaucus, keeper of these flocks,³⁴ understand thoroughly what I shall say. Give your dogs their food in the porch. This advice is good. They will then hear the steps of men or beasts going towards your enclosures more easily.”

Glaucus, finding the advice good on trial, praised the giver of it more than ever. When they had eaten, animated conversation followed. Homer narrated his adventures in the various countries and cities he had seen. Glaucus was delighted, but as it was time to sleep, they went to rest.

XXIII. The following morning, Glaucus thought it necessary to inform his master of the agreeable acquaintance he had made. Confiding the flocks to the care of his fellow slave, and leaving Homer in the house, assuring him that he

May not, as Larcher plausibly conjectures, a word have been drawn into the text, through the ignorance of copyists, which had originally been placed in the margin as explanatory. See his note.

³³ Confer. *Odyss.* xiv. 34. That passage and another in the same book (290) seem plainly to refer to circumstances mentioned in the text, i.e. the punishment of the dogs by Glaucus and (§ xvi.) the flight of Thestorides.

³⁴ The Florentine and Aldine editions and that of Stephens (1573), as well as Harleian MSS., (No. 8600,) have *Γλαῦκε πέπιων ἐπιῶν τὸ ἔπος τὸ ἔπος τὸ ἐνὶ φρεσὶ θήσω*. But Suidas (art. Ὀμηρος) gives the following, *Γλαῦκε Βροτῶν ἐπιόπτα*.

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would not fail to return quickly, he departed. Arrived at Bollissus,³⁵ a small town, at a little distance from the farm, he related to his master all that he knew of Homer, speaking of his arrival as an astonishing thing, and demanding to know his wishes on the subject. His master did not like the occurrence, and blamed Glaucus for his foolishness, in admitting a blind man to his table. Nevertheless, he ordered Homer to be brought to him.

XXIV. Glaucus, on his return, related to Homer all the particulars of his visit, and begged him to follow him thither, telling him that all his future happiness and good fortune depended on his going to Bolissus. Homer acquiesced in what he said. Glaucus presented him to his master, who found him to be a man of information and talent, and offered to retain him in his house if he would instruct his children, who were yet very young.³⁶ Homer accepted these proposals. It was at Bolissus, in the house of this Chian citizen, that he composed the *Cercopia*³⁷, the *Batrachomyomachia*³⁸, the *Epicichlidia*,³⁹ and all those other amusing books and poems that have gained him such celebrity. When Thestorides heard that Homer was in Chios, he left the island.

³⁵ Bolissus, now called Voliso, is a small town on the north-eastern coast of Chios, and near Cardamyle. Thucyd. viii. 24.

³⁶ See Larcher's note.

³⁷ Included by Suidas and Proclus among his works. The word signifies "deceivers." The Greek verb *κερκοπιζειν* means "to act fraudulently." See Lobeck, *Aglauph.* p. 1296; Müller, *Dor.* vol. i. p. 457; Welck. *Ep. Cycl.* p. 409, note; Mure, vol. ii. p. 367-369.

³⁸ This poem, "The Battle of the Frogs and Mice," is a mock-heroic, in three books; and of the best of its kind. It is evidently not by Homer, as many of the passages are direct parodies on parts of the Iliad. Curiously enough the *Batrachomyomachia* was the first of the Homeric poems printed at the revival of letters. It was edited by Laonicus of Crete, (Venice, 1486,) and printed in alternate black and red lines. The author is now considered to be Pigres, and he likewise is responsible for the *Margites*, which last, however, Bude (*Geschichte der Hellenischen Dichtkunst*, i. p. 279) denies, though Suidas is confirmed by Plutarch (*de Herod. malign.* 48 p. 873. f.). He was a Halicarnassian, and brother or son of Artemisia, queen of Caria, according to some accounts. The *Margites* was a comic poem, the subject of which was the adventures and actions of one whose character is, in the fragments, summed up thus, "For much he knew, but little knew he well," and that little he displays with the greatest self-glorification in the world. The poem was believed by Plato (*Alcib.* ii. p. 147, c.) and Aristotle (*Ethic. Nicom.* vi, 7, *Magn. Moral.* ad Eudem. v, 7) to be a Homeric production, was highly esteemed by Callimachus, and in the time of Demosthenes, the name of *Margites* was proverbial for stupidity (*Harpocr.* s. v. *Μαργίτης*; Phot. *Sex.* p. 247, ed. Porson; Plut. In *Demosth.* 23; *Æschin. adv. Ctesiph.* p. 297). The *Margites* was considered by Aristotle as the essence of comedy, as the Iliad and Odyssey were of heroic and narrative poetry. *Poetic.* § 7. Lindemann, in his work *De Lyra*, (i. p. 79, &c.) has collected all the fragments of this poem. See Mure, ii. 358, sqq. and ii. 363-367.

³⁹ Homer is said to have called one of his poems, *Ἐπικηλίδες*, because when he sang to the boys they rewarded him with fieldfares. See Payne Knight, *Prolegg. ad Homer.* p. viii.; Athenæus, ii. 24, xiv. 9; Mure, ii. p. 362; and Welcker, *Ep. Cycl.* 412.

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XXV. Some time after, Homer begged the Chian citizen to take him to the town of Chios: he there established a school,⁴⁰ in which he taught the maxims of poetry to young people. He acquitted himself of this task so efficiently, in the opinion of the Chians, that the greater part held him in high estimation. He thus acquired a considerable fortune, married,⁴¹ and had two daughters, one of whom died single, the other married a Chian.⁴²

XXVI. He shows great gratitude to his benefactors in his poems, particularly to Mentor of Ithaca, in the *Odyssey*, on account of his having taken care of him during his blindness, while in that island. He mentions his name in that poem, placing him amongst the companions of Odysseus, and relates that that prince, on his departure for Troy, appointed him steward of his house and lands, knowing him to be the most just and worthy man in Ithaca. Homer often mentions him in other parts of his poem, and when Athenê is represented speaking to some one, it is under the form of Mentor.⁴³ He also testifies his gratitude to Phemius, who, not content with instructing him in literature, had also maintained him at his own expense. It may be observed in these verses

⁴⁰ Speaking of the antiquities of the island of Chios, Chandler says (*Travels*, vol. i. p. 61): "The most curious remain which has been named, without reason, The School of Homer. It is on the coast, at some distance from the city northward, and appears to have been an open temple of Cybele, formed on the top of a rock. The shape is oval, and in the centre is the image of a goddess, the head and an arm wanting. She is represented, as usual, sitting. The chair has a lion carved on each side, and on the back. The area is bounded by a low rim or seat, and about five yards over. The whole is hewn out of the mountain, is rude, indistinct, and probably of the most remote antiquity." Pope also, in his *Introductory Essay*, mentions a ruinous building in the neighbourhood of Bolissus, as being traditionally named the house of Homer.

⁴¹ His wife's father seems to have been Creophilus, (according to other accounts he was Homer's son-in-law, and received the *Οίχαλία* as a dowry,) an epic poet of Chios, Samos, or Ios. Plato, *Rep.* x. 3; Callim. *Epig.* 6; Strabo. xiv. p. 638; Sext. *Empir.* ad *Math.* i. 2; Eustath. *ad Hom.* Il. ii. 730; Suidas, s. v. Plutarach reports that it was in the possession of his family that the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* were discovered. Mure, ii. 276, sqq.

⁴² For Chian read Cyprian, as Stasinus, the son-in-law, was a poet of Cyprus. He contests the honour of the authorship of the *Cypriacs*, with Homer, (Welcker, *Ep. Cycl.* p. 300,) and Hegesias, (or Hegesinus, according to Photius, *Cod.* 239, p. 319, ed. Bekker,) a Salaminian. Two lines of the *Cypriacs* are preserved in Plato's *Euthyphron*, (p. 12, a, where the Scholiast attributes them to Homer,) where that philosopher censures them as untrue, by the mouth of Socrates:

"Almighty Zeus, unwillingly you name,
For ever linked with fear is bashful shame."

The extant hymn to Aphrodite, is conjectured by Schoel (*Histoire de la Littérature Grecque Profane*, vol. i. p. 167) to be a fragment of this poem. By some, this poem is stated to have been a dowry with Homer's daughter. The number of books it contained is doubtful; Athenæus, however, quotes the eleventh. It related the events which led to the Trojan war, on which see Smith, iii. p. 899; Mure, ii. 279-282. Herod. ii. 117. Compare with the plot of the *Cypriacs*, Eurip. *Orest.* 1635, and *Helen*, 38.

⁴³ *Odyssey*, ii, 399.

particularly:⁴⁴

“A herald placed a magnificent lyre in the hands of Phemius, the worthiest pupil of Apollo; unwillingly he takes it, constrained to sing among those lovers. Traversing the lyre with light and active fingers, he produces melodious sounds.”

He also celebrates the sea-captain with whom he had traveled through so many lands. His name was Mentès, and these are the verses:⁴⁵

“My name Mentès; born of Anchialus, illustrious by his valour, I reign over the expert-rowing Taphians.”

He also speaks of the armourer, Tychius, who had hospitably entertained him at Neonteichos. The verses in his praise occur in the Iliad, thus:⁴⁶

“Already the son of Telamon waits on him near, carrying a tower-like shield. Tychius, at Hylæ resident, unequalled in industry by any of his fellows, made him this buckler, a master-piece of his art, formed of the spoil of seven mighty oxen, bound by a strong covering of brass.”

XXVII. These poems rendered Homer celebrated in Ionia, and his reputation began to spread itself in the continent of Greece. On this account, many persons visited him during his residence in Chios, and some advised him to go to Greece. He had always desired to do so, and thus the counsel pleased him.

XXVIII. He had praised the town of Argos very frequently,⁴⁷ but remembering that he had no where mentioned Athens, he introduced some verses into the larger Iliad⁴⁸ in its praise, where he speaks of that city in the most flattering manner. It occurs in the Catalogue of the Ships:⁴⁹

“The city of generous Erechtheus, which the fruitful Earth produced, and Athenê, daughter of Zeus, fostered.”⁵⁰

⁴⁴ Our author has, however, substituted *Φημίω ὅς δὴ πολλὸν ἐκαίνυτο παντας ἀείδων*, “Phemius excelling in the art of song,” for *Φημίω, ὅς ῥ’ ἤειδε παρὰ μνηστῆρσιν ἀνάγκη*, as it stands in the *Odyssey* (i. 154). And then he connects the second and third verses by *καὶ πάλιν*, as if there were several lines between them. Perhaps, as Larcher thinks, the writer quoted from memory; or very possibly his authority was a corrupt and ill-written copy.

⁴⁵ *Odys.* i. 180

⁴⁶ *Il.* vii. 219.

⁴⁷ *Conf. Hewd.* v. 67.

⁴⁸ *Viz.* the Iliad, which is thus distinguished from the Lesser Iliad.

⁴⁹ The ancients distinguished the different parts of the Iliad by various titles, a practice which gave rise to the theory of Lachman. Aristotle (*Poetic.* xvi. § 3) speaks of the “washing of Odysseus,” and “the Tale of Alcinoüs” (in § 5). Peisistratus put a period to these distinctions at his revision of the text.

⁵⁰ *Il.* ii. 547. The compliment is intended to the autochthoneity of the Athenians. Pindar, the old poem called the Danais (*Harpoler. s. Αὐτοχθων*), Euripides (*Ion.* 21), and Apollodorus (*iii.* 14,

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He then highly extols Menestheus. He excels, says he, in arranging the chariots and infantry in order of battle. Here are the lines:

“The son of Peteus, Menestheus, led these troops. Of all the mortals fed by Earth, none equalled this chief in the art of ordering the chariots and forces for battle.”⁵¹

He placed Aias, son of Telamon, near the Athenians; he commanded the Salaminians. That is in the following verses:

“Aias, son of Telamon, conducted twelve long ships⁵² from Salamis, and placed them beside the Athenian squadron.”⁵³

Lastly, in the *Odyssey*, he feigns that Athenê, after an interview with Odysseus, goes to Athens, the town she honoured above all others:

“Taking flight towards the Marathonian plains, she proceeded to the magnificent town of Athens, the famous dwelling place of long-departed Erechtheus.”⁵⁴

XXIX. After inserting these lines in his poems, Homer prepared to set out for Greece, and passed over to Samos on his way thither. The Samians were employed on his arrival in celebrating the Apaturian games. An inhabitant of Samos, who had seen him in Chios, observing him descending from the vessel, ran to inform his countrymen of the arrival of the poet, whom he praised most enthusiastically. The Samians deputed him to fetch Homer. He immediately retraced his steps, and meeting Homer, thus addressed him: “Chian host, the Samians celebrate the Apaturian festival: the citizens bid you to the feast.” Homer consented, and accompanied the messenger.

XXX. During their walk, they encountered some women offering a sacrifice to Kourotophos.⁵⁵ The priestess observing him, said angrily to him, “Man, get thee from our sacrifices.” Homer reflected awhile on these words, having asked of his conductor who had addressed them to him, and to what deity they sacrificed. The Samian replied, “that it was a woman sacrificing to

6; 15, 1). name Erichthonius, son of Hephæstos and Gaia, as being the person brought up by Athene. Conf. Plato (*Timæus*, § 6). But the Scholiast (*Il.* ii. 546) treats them as the same person under two names, a view now generally accepted. Conf. also *Etymologicon Magn.* *Ἐρεχθεύς*, Plato (*Critias*, § 4), Ovid (*Metam.* ii. 759), and Grote, vol. i. pp. 271 278, 279.

⁵¹ *Il.* ii. 552.

⁵² The *long* ships were vessels of war; the *round* ships, merchantmen and transports. See Smith's *Dictionary of Antiquities*.

⁵³ *Il.* ii. 577. The reputed interpolation of Solon.

⁵⁴ *Odys.* vii. 81.

⁵⁵ Kourotophos is, with some probability, supposed to be identical with the Roman Lucina. See Larcher's note.

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Kourotrophos.” On this, Homer composed and repeated the following lines:

“Hear my prayer, O Kourotrophos! May that woman abhor the caresses of amiable youth! May she be only pleased by those of men whose hair is white with age, whose heart is burning, and whose senses are blunted.”⁵⁶

XXXI. When arrived at the place where the Phratrium feasted, Homer paused on the threshold, and recited these verses to his conductor, while a fire was kindling in the hall: though some contend that the fire was not lighted until afterwards:

“A man is proud of his children; a town of its battlements; a plain of its horses; the ocean of its navies;⁵⁷ riches ornament the house; just judges seated in the hall of justice, are a noble spectacle; but the most pleasant sight, in my opinion, is that of a burning fire, on a day when the son of Saturn decks the ground with snow and frost.”

He entered, and seating himself with the Phratrium, received much attention and respect from its members. Here he passed the night.

XXXII. The next day he went out. Some potters having observed him while they were mending their fire, invited him to enter, and not the less readily from having a knowledge of his talents. They entreated him to sing some of his verses, promising to recompense him for his kindness by presenting him with some of their vases, or in any other way they could. Homer sung them those verses which are called “The Poem of the Furnace:”⁵⁸

“Potters, if ye bestow on me the stipulated reward, I will sing these favourable verses to you.⁵⁹ Hear my prayer, Athene, protect the furnace. Grant that the cotylia and the baskets⁶⁰ be covered with a shining black; may they also bake quickly. May they sell for much in the Agora, for much in the street. Grant, O goddess, that I may increase in wisdom. But if you shamelessly endeavour to deceive me, I invoke all the pests of your trade, the Syntripi,

⁵⁶ These verses were applied by Sophocles to a scornful mistress. Athen. xiii. p. 592, A.

⁵⁷ An ancient British inscription, cut in wood, and given by the Rev. Horne, (Bibliography. vol. i. p. 105,) says, *Enwawg meiciad o' i voc.* “The swineherd is proud of his swine.”

⁵⁸ These verses, as Jul. Pollux cites them, (Onomastic, x. 85, p. 1284,) are entitled, *Κεραμεῖς*, “the clay-potters.” That grammarian mentions that some attribute them to Hesiod. Mure (Greek Literature, vol. ii. p. 362) cites the Song of the Bell of Schiller, as resembling this poem.

⁵⁹ “May the following happen to you.” Athenê was one of the tutelary deities of the potters, as a patroness of the arts.

⁶⁰ The potters made vases like baskets; hence their name.

Asbeti, Abacti, and Omodami,⁶¹ on your furnace. May the hearth and the home become the prey of the flame, and, during the confusion caused by the fire, may nothing be heard save the lamentations of the potters. As the trembling of the terrified horse, so may be that of the furnace at the bursting of the vases. Circe, dread daughter of the Sun, celebrated for thy many enchantments, poison the potters, and destroy their work. And thou, Chiron, bring thy dire hosts of Centaurs⁶² and their victims to aid in the destruction of these places. May the furnace fall under the stroke of the destroyers! may the potters, to enhance their grief, be the miserable spectators of the frightful scene! I shall rejoice at your misfortunes! May those who approach to extinguish the flames, be consumed by the fire, that all the world may learn not to commit injustice.”

XXXIII. He passed the winter at Samos. At the Neomenia, [or New Moons,] he frequented the houses of the rich, where he sang the Eirisionic hymn,⁶³ thus earning his subsistence during his visits, he was usually surrounded by the children of the most noble men of the island.

“We directed our steps towards the mansion of a wealthy man, full of precious things. Gates fly open!⁶⁴ Plutos presents himself, accompanied by joyous Mirth and gentle Peace. May the goblets overflow, may the flame ascend from the hearth, may the table groan under its plenteous burden! May the wife of the son of the house come to you drawn by mules, and in a chariot! may she, seated in an amber chair,⁶⁵ joyfully spin her wool! I shall return, yea, I shall

⁶¹ *Syntrips* signifies the bruising sustained by the vases in rubbing against each other; *smaragos*, the noise they make in breaking; *asbetos*, is an inextinguishable fire in the workshop; *abaktos*, the consequent astonishment of the potters; and *omodamos*, the annihilation of every thing.

⁶² In the preceding verse we read *πέτθε πυραίθοσαν* Barnes corrects it to *πέτθε πύρ' αἰθουσαν*, and his correction is admitted by Reynolds. Circe, daughter of Helios, (the Sun,) was herself a goddess, and is parallel to Medeia. According to Hesiod (*Theog.* 1001) she had two children by Odysseus, Agrius and Latinus. Conf. Apollod. i. 9. Strabo v. Virgil, *Ecl.* viii. v. 70. *Æn.* iii. v. 386; vii. v. 10. Hygno *fab.* cxxv. Ovid. *Metam.* xiv. *fab.* i. and iv.

⁶³ The Eirision was (Schol. Aristoph. *Plut.* 1055, and *Equit.* 725) a branch of olive, and sometimes of laurel, rolled in bandages of linen entwined. To the pendant ends, figs, bread, honey, oil, and wine, were fastened. Clemens Alex. (*Stromat.* iv, p. 566) says, “The Eirision carries figs, bread, and honey, in a cotylus, anointing oil, and wine, the enervating vapour of which inspires gentle slumber.” Again, in a fragment of the Polyidus of Sophocles, preserved by Porphyrius (*de Abstinentiâ*, ii. § 19, p. 134): “We see there the wool of the sheep, the liquor of the vine, bunches of grapes, grains of wheat, oil, and artistically worked veins of honey and wax made by the bees.” See also *Ædip. Colon.* 475, and *Mure*, ii. 362.

⁶⁴ “Lift up your heads, O ye gates.” Psalm xxiv. 7.

⁶⁵ The Eridanus, whence the electron (amber) was brought, was not then sufficiently known, and perhaps these are wrongly ascribed to Homer. See Plin. *Hist. Nat.* xxvii. 2; Humboldt's *Cosmos*, vol. ii. p. 493, n. (Bohn's edition); Gesner *de Electro veterum in Commentar. Societatis Regiæ Gottingensis* (tom. iii. p. 85); Smith, *Grecian Antiquities*, Herod. iii. 115; Sophocles (*Antig.* v. 1033); and Buttmann, *Mythologus* (vol. ii. p. 337).

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return, like unto the swallow every year!⁶⁶ I am at your gate! Whether you present me with any thing or no, I remain not; I purpose not to live with you!”

These verses are sung every time tribute is levied in the honour of Apollo Pythos.⁶⁷

XXXIV. The spring having arrived, Homer desired to leave Samos for Athens. He sailed for that place in company with some Samians, and arrived at the island of Ios.⁶⁸ They did not stop at the town, but at some distance off, on the seashore. Homer, feeling himself very ill, was carried on shore. Contrary winds retarding the departure of the vessel, the travelers remained several days at anchor. Some of the inhabitants visited Homer, and they no sooner heard him speak than they felt a great degree of veneration for him.

XXXV. While the sailors and the townspeople were speaking with Homer, some fishermen's children ran their vessel on shore, and descending to the sands, addressed these words to the assembled persons: “Hear us, strangers, explain our riddle if ye can.” Then some of those that were present ordered them to speak. “We leave,” say they, “what we take, and we carry with us that which we cannot take.” No one being able to solve the enigma, they thus expounded it. “Having had an unproductive fishery,” say they in explanation, “we sat down on the sand, and being annoyed by the vermin, left the fish we had taken on the shore, taking with us the vermin we could not catch.”⁶⁹ Homer, on hearing this, made these verses: “Children, your fathers possess neither ample heritages, nor numerous flocks.”

XXXVI. Homer died in Ios of the disease he had contracted on his arrival, and not, as some authors have related, [caring more for interest than truth,] of grief at not understanding the enigma of the fisher-boys.⁷⁰ He was buried near

⁶⁶ Conf. Aristodph. Equit. v. 416.

⁶⁷ In the Greek religious calendar, the first days of the months were always sacred to Apollo; and that festival (The Neomenia) was one of the most popular in every age of classical antiquity. Hesiod, Works and Days, 770; Herod. iv. 35, and vi. 57; Philock. ap. Scholl. min. et Scholl. Buhm. ad Odyss. xx. 155; xxi. 258; Mure, vol. i. p. 381, and Larcher's note on Herod. iv. 35.

⁶⁸ The present Nio.

⁶⁹ The enigma is founded on the distinction made by the ancients between *having* and *possessing*, which Plato (Theætet. § 126) causes Socrates to define: “To *possess*, therefore, does not appear to me to be the same as to *have*; for instance, if any one, having bought a garment, and having it in his power, should not wear it, we should not say that he *has* it, but that he *possesses* it.” Cary's trans. vol. i. p. 348, Bohn's Classical Library. Similarly our own poet wrote, (Othello, iv. 1.) “They have it very oft that have it not,” where the word is used in two different senses. Somewhat akin to it is the riddle alluded to by Plato, Rep. v. c. 22. Lactantius has translated this Homeric enigma into Latin, *Symposium*, tom. ii. p. 255).

⁷⁰ The following passage occurs in Pseudo-Plutarch's Life of Homer.

”He was warned by an oracle to beware of the *young men's riddle*. The meaning of this remained

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the shore of the island of Ios, by his companions, and those citizens who had visited him during his illness. Many years after, when his poems, become public, were admired by all, the inhabitants of Ios inscribed these elegiacs on his tomb; they are certainly not composed by himself.

“THE EARTH HERE COVERS THE HEAD OF DIVINE HOMER, WHOSE POETRY HAS IMMORTALIZED HEROES.”⁷¹

XXXVII. It may be seen from what I have said, that Homer was neither a Dorian, nor of the island of Ios, but an Æolian.⁷² This may also be conjectured from the great poet only speaking of [what he thinks] the most admirable customs, and he would naturally suppose those of his own country to be the best.⁷³ It may be judged from these verses:

“They raise the heads of the oxen toward heaven, cut their throats, and sever them in pieces; they separate the thighs, and place over them a double layer of fat, and bleeding morsels from every part of the victim.⁷⁴ The kidneys are not mentioned here, the Æolians being the only people of Greece who do not burn them. Homer also shows his Æolian descent in the following verses, there again describing the customs of that country:

“The elder burns the sacrifice on the wood of the altar, pouring over it libations of wine. The youths stand around holding five-barred gridirons.”⁷⁵

The Æolians are the only people of Greece who roast the entrails on *five*-barred gridirons, those of the other Greeks having but *three*. The Æolians also say *πέμπε* for *πέντε* [five].

long unexplained to him, till he arrived at the island of Ios; there, as he sat conversing with the fishermen, some of them proposed a riddle in verse to him, and, not comprehending it, he died of grief.” Pope, in his Introductory Essay, says, “The story refutes itself, by carrying superstition at one end, and folly at the other. It seems conceived with an air of derision, to lay a great man in the dust after a foolish manner.” This completely sets the question of the authenticity of this Life at rest, since the writer plainly refers to this idle tale, recorded by an author of so much later date.

⁷¹ The translation of Grotius is as follows:

“Ista tegit tellum sacrum caput illud Homeri
Cantibus Heroum qui res cœlestibus æquat.”

⁷² Simonides of Kêos calls Homer a Chian. *Fragm.* 69, ed. Schneidewin.

⁷³ Exactly the idea of Herodotus, iii. 33.

⁷⁴ Il. i. 459, and ii. 422. Victims were variously sacrificed. In sacrificing to the celestial deities they raised the heads of the victims, while they immolated them to the infernal gods with their heads down. The Grecian ceremonies differed widely from the Jewish, but much resembled the Roman, of which they formed the basis. The thighs and small pieces “from every part,” were burnt, the rest roasted in slices like the Oriental *Kabobs*. See Smith’s Dictionary of Antiquities.

⁷⁵ Il. i. 463.

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XXXVIII. I have now concluded that which concerns the birth, life, and death of Homer. It remains for me to determine the time at which he lived. This is most easily done in the following manner. The island of Lesbos was not colonized⁷⁶ till the hundred and thirtieth year after the Trojan war, and eighteen years subsequently Smyrna was built by the Cumæans. At this time Homer was born.⁷⁷ From the birth of the poet to the passage of Xerxes into Greece, six hundred and twenty-two years elapsed. The course of time may easily be calculated by a reference to the Archonships. It is thus proved that Homer was born one hundred and sixty-eight years after the taking of Troy.

⁷⁶ It was not, however, destitute of inhabitants, for the Pelasgi, driven from Thessaly (B. C. 1540) by Deucalion, settled there. Dionys. Halicarn. Antiq. Roman, i. § 18. The Æolians arrived B.C. 1140, and as the Pelasgi lived in wandering tribes, they were soon reduced.

⁷⁷ See Clinton Fasti Hellen. vol. iii. p. 146. Conf. Grote's Animadversions on Clinton, Hist. of Greece, vol. ii. part i. chapt. xix. pp 47-48.